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MAJOR OWENS
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Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

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January 14, 1981

The Honorable Edmund S. Muskie
Secretary of State
Department of State
21st & Virginia Ave., N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20520

Dear Mr. Secretary:

I would like to express my appreciation for your responsiveness to my request that you call Mr. and Mrs. John Sullivan about their son, John, who is currently missing in El Salvador. However, I am still very concerned about serious questions which have been raised concerning the degree of priority being given to the search for Mr. Sullivan.

I have tried to cooperate with your Department on this matter, but certain statements made to the Sullivans by the American embassy in San Salvador and the White House, as well as the political instability currently existing in El Salvador, have made me fearful that Mr. Sullivan's safety is not being given the attention it deserves.

Although my office has been given assurances by Mr. Susan Ward, the Director of the overseas Citizens Office of the State Department, that [illegible] would be given a "high priority."

The [illegible] has been held in a very [illegible] Bureau of [illegible] material security [illegible] have that can be [illegible] this matter. [illegible] were recently [illegible] by Mr. Sullivan.

Meanwhile, while working closely with both the Sullivans and your Department, I have noticed [illegible] in the area of [illegible] identification of bodies, [illegible] etc.) have [illegible] with the Sullivans.

According to Mr. Ward, through the identification information [illegible] relatives [illegible] Embassy, and [illegible] in order for [illegible] Embassy of the [illegible] public. [illegible] to [illegible] this as to the [illegible] of [illegible] public [illegible] American citizens. I understand that [illegible] the [illegible]

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murders of four American nuns in El Salvador states that, while there is no evidence that the Salvadoran government was involved in these murders, there is circumstantial evidence that it assisted in the coverup.

Finally, I have been informed by the home office of Sheraton Hotels in Boston that the Sheraton Motor Inn in San Salvador claims to have informed Mr. Brian J. Beach, the Defense Attache to the American embassy, on a date prior to January 6 of Mr. Sullivan's disappearance. Yet, the embassy claims that they were not informed of the disappearance until the morning of the 6th, on which date they notified the State Department in Washington. Obviously, if there was any delay in transmitting this information, it would have had a serious negative effect on the investigation.

In light of the above concerns, could you please see that the following questions are answered with dispatch: 1) What has been done up to this point by the State Department in the investigation of the disappearance of John Sullivan? 2) What alternatives may be available to avoid a total reliance upon the Salvadoran police in the investigation? 3) When exactly did the American embassy in San Salvador learn that Mr. Sullivan was missing?

I look forward to your reply and the continued cooperation of the State Department in this matter.

Sincerely,

Marge Roukema

Marge Roukema
Member of Congress

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